of file charges from applicants. RBI has deputed an officer to make enquiry in this regard and he has been informed that the Brito finance and Trading Co. Ltd., New Delhi is a consultancy firm dealing with industrial project loans, bank loans for plant and machinery, working capital etc. The firm provides assistance to borrowers in getting loans sanctioned and it earns commission for the services rendered.

(b) No such complaint appears to have been received in Banking Division in the recent past.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Foreign Donations

2782. SHRI TILAK RAJ SINGH:

SHRI BHIMRAO VISHNUJI BADADE:

SHRI R. DEVADASS:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Efforts on to let Cong. of the hook" appearing in 'The Hindustan Times' dated July 23, 1997;

(b) if so, the factual position thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUCTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is the opinion of the Correspondent of the paper and not that of Government.

(c) The matter is pending in Delhi High Court. Since the matter is subjudice, no views can be expressed at this stage.

Restriction on Imports

2783. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have imposed restrictions on the import of some agricultural and consumer goods;

(b) if so, the details of those items;

(c) whether the Government propose to relax the restriction on the import of some farm goods; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) Import of agricultural and consumer goods continues to be restricted under the current Export & Import Policy. However, Import of certain agricultural & consumer goods is permitted either freely or against the transferable Special Import Licence. Item-wise import policy of various goods is indicated in the ITC (HS) Classificaitions of Export & Import Items, copies of which are available in the Parliament library.

(c) & (d) Review of Export and Import Policy is an on going process and changes in it are made from time to time as and when considered necessary.

Export of Gold Jewellery

2784. SHRI AJMEERA CHANDULAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the value of gold jewellery exported from India during each of the last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that exports of gold jewellery from the country have virtually come to a stand still in recent months;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the staps taken to boost jewellery export during 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) The value of gold jewellery exported from India during each of the last three years is given below:

(US $ Million)

Year	Value
1994-95	421.20
1995-96	480.40
1996-97	511.80

(Source:DGCI&S)

(b) No, Sir. The exports of gold jewellery during the period April-June, 1997 vis-a-vis April-June, 1996 is given below:

(US $ Million)

April - June'97 (Pro.)	156.23
April - June'96	146.97

(Source GJEPC, Mumbai)

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Gold Jewellery has been identified by the Government of India as an Extreme Focus product and continues to be a thrust area of our exports. Accordingly, the Government has taken a number of steps to boost exports from this sector during 1997-98 which include : (i) in order to increase the supply of gold, RBI has been authorised to nominate additional agencies for the import and supply of precious metals to exporters; (ii) third party

exports have been allowed in order to encourage small exporters; (iii) value addition norms have been further simplified; and (iv) the period for the fulfilment of export obligation has been suitably increased.

Air Intelligence Unit

2785. SHRI N. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up an Air Intelligence Unit;

(b) if so, the airports to be checked against smuggling and other illegal activities; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to check economic offences which are on the rise in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) Air Intelligence Units (AIUs) of Customs are already functioning at the respective International airports. AIUs are engaged in gathering intelligence and taking specific actien to prevent and check smuggling activities.

(c) Field formations are alert to detect and prevent economic offences in the country. Specific measure taken includes targeting of intelligence; surveillance over sensitive area to curb smuggling; setting up of Directorate of valuation to detect cases of customs under-valuation; strict and deterrent action is taken against the persons found involved in smuggling and economic offences.

Guidelines for JRY/NRY etc.

2786. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government/RBI have issued any specific guidelines to maintain the personal ledger account, frame treasury rules etc. for respective States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any specific directions have also been given to State Governments to keep separate accounts for JRY/NRY schemes, Employment Assurance Scheme etc.; and

(d) if, so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and to the extent available, will be laid on the Table of the House.

Health Insurance to Private Sector

2787. SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the prime reasons for setting up of the Health Insurance to the private sector;

(b) whether the Government have chalked out any guidelines/directions for those aspiring to enter into this business; and

(c) whether the Government have sorted out the problems associated with settlement of medi-claims which is a major source of public dissatisfaction and the steps taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) (a) and (b) In the Budget Speech, the intention of the Government was announced to move necessary amendments to enable GIC to float joint ventures and also to allow entry of selected Indian players in the health insurance sector in view of the low penetration of health insurance cover in the country and the demand for new health insurance products. Comprehensive regulations will be made and enforced by the Insurance Regulatory Authority for all health insurance service providers.

(c) The GIC had, in July/August, 1996, made certain amendments in the Medi-claim Insurance Policy to make the administration of the Scheme and the claims settlement procedure simpler. The overall limits of reimbursement have been enhanced and various sub-limits, such as, room charges, doctors' fees, medicines and diagnostic charges, etc. have been removed. This simplification will help in prompt settlement of health insurance claims on compliance of requirements by the claimants.

Export of Mangoes

2788. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a great possibility of exporting mangoes from India to other countries;

(b) whether Australia has shown interest in importing Indian mangoes and setting up a Mango Processing Centre in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Australia has currently prohibited the import of fresh mangoes from India on grounds of pest infestation. As soon as efficacious treatment to eradicate pest of concern of mangoes is found, it would be possible to export mangoes to Australia. Government is not aware of any Australian Interest in setting up of a Mango Processing Centre in Andhra Pradesh.

[Translation]

Use of Hindi

2789. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of meetings of Hindi Consultative